

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
9 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MIDDLE EAST

(Situation Report Number 16  
As of 1630 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. With the end of the fourth day of fighting, neither side--though heavily engaged--appears to have achieved a dramatic breakthrough. The situation on the ground is still confused with both sides reporting attacks and counterattacks on their various fronts. Israeli air strength is heavily committed to ground support operations, although aircraft attacked two airfields in Egypt and launched a heavy attack on Damascus, striking some non-tactical targets.

State Dept. review  
completed

SYRIAN FRONT

2. According to press sources, the Israeli military command acknowledged this morning that Israeli forces were fighting hard to beat back a Syrian counterattack north of Qunaytirah in the central sector of the Golan Heights.

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3.

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At least one aircraft was lost and two others damaged today in the Heights area. The Israelis sent more than 370 air sorties over the Golan Heights and Syria today.

4. According to the US Embassy in Amman, Jordanian sources claim that Syrians re-occupied Qunaytirah last night, but this has not been confirmed by any other source. The Jordanians also asserted that Israeli counterattacks elsewhere in the Golan Heights had been thrown back. There is some doubt in Amman that the Syrians are really winning, however.

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The message could, however, be intended to impress other Arab states with Jordan's need to maintain a defensive posture.

5.

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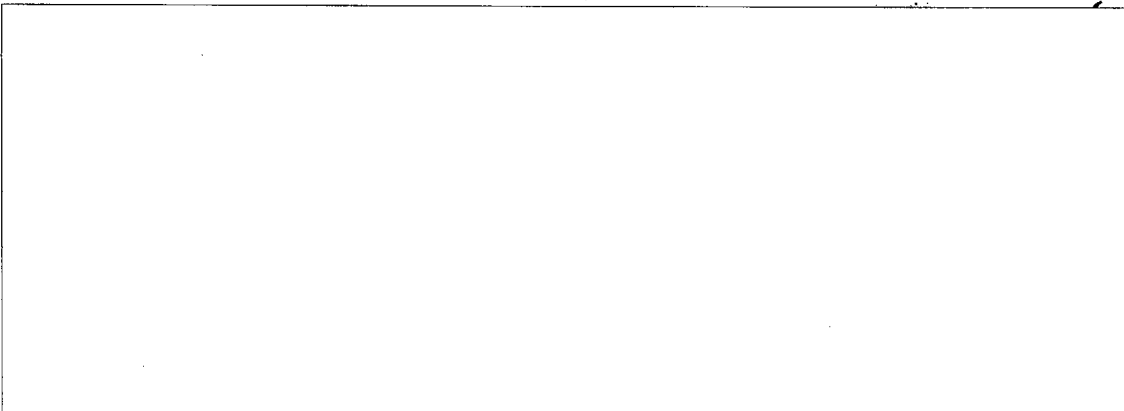
Western press sources in Damascus indicate that at least three civilians employed by the UN were killed. Syria's health minister has

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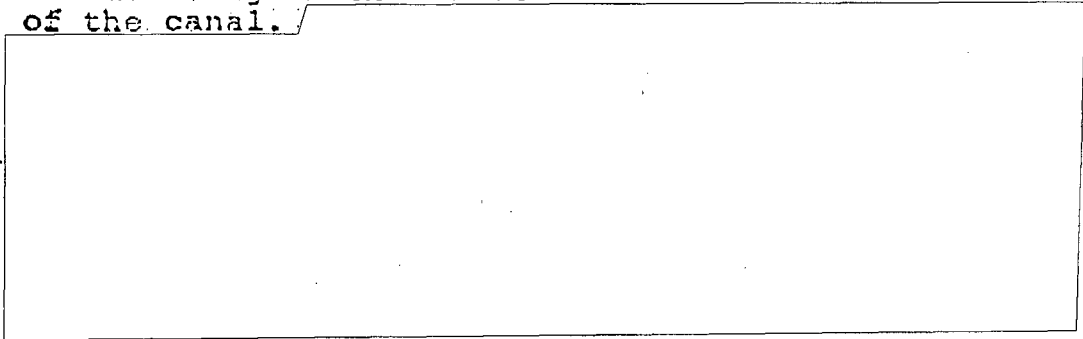
claimed about 100 civilians were being treated in hospitals for injuries received in the air raid. There is no confirmation available of a CBS report that the Soviet Embassy--rather than the cultural center--was hit or that 30 Russians were killed.

EGYPTIAN FRONT

6. The situation on the ground at the Sinai front remains confused with both sides reporting heavy fighting. Neither side appears to have achieved any major successes. Cairo claims that heavy tank battles have been fought in the southern sector of the canal today. 25X1



8. The Egyptians, in an official communique, are claiming to have rebuffed Israeli counter-attacks to their forces on the eastern bank and to be advancing on the southern and central sectors of the canal. 25X1



9. In the north, the Israelis continued their heavy strikes against Port Said, but there is yet no information on ground operations in this area. The Egyptian communique did not mention the situation on this part of the canal.

10. During the day, the Israelis raided two airfields in the interior of Egypt, Al Mansura northeast of Cairo, and Wadi Al Jandali between Cairo and Suez. There has been no further information to confirm the Israeli air attack on Cairo reported earlier. It seems likely that the raids on the airfields were responsible for air raid alerts in Cairo and planes may have overflowed the city. Neither airfield is in the immediate vicinity of the capital, however.

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#### ISRAELI ASSESSMENT

11. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] there have been no major changes in the situation along the Suez Canal. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] only minor skirmishes have occurred along the canal. This conflicts with Egyptian claims of heavy fighting along the canal with Egyptian forces causing an Israeli retreat.

25X1

12. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the major Israeli air attacks today have been against the Egyptian bridgeheads across the canal. The Israelis admit to losing seven planes to heavy anti-aircraft fire during these attacks. The Israelis also report their attack on the two Egyptian airfields at Al Mansurah and Wadi Al Jandali and claim that ten Egyptian aircraft were destroyed on the ground.

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13. The Israelis admit having lost 49 aircraft as of Tuesday morning and 19 more in today's actions against both the Egyptians and Syrians. The Israelis claim to have destroyed 500 Egyptian tanks.

14. The Israelis claim to be experiencing shortages in materiel and will soon begin to conserve ammunition, especially for their 105-mm and 175-mm artillery pieces. They contrast these shortages with what they feel is a surprising amount of materiel for the Arabs, whom they claim are fighting as if their reserves were unlimited.

15. On the Golan Heights, the Israelis claim the front line is now at the original cease-fire line. They also assert that they have destroyed one of the two Syrian armored brigades that led the original attack on the Heights. In addition, the Israelis claim the Syrians lost more than 100 tanks in today's battles and six to eight aircraft.

25X1

EGYPTIAN ASSESSMENT

17. Aircraft losses were listed as nine for Israel, bringing Egyptian claims of Israeli aircraft destroyed to 81. Egypt has admitted losing a total of 23 aircraft.

EGYPT

18. A US Interests Section official in Cairo was told by Mohamad Riad, Secretary General of the Arab League, that Egypt's goal is to move its forces to the "international boundaries" of the Sinai. The Egyptian implied that Cairo's territorial aims were to reach the 1948 Palestine Mandate boundaries, but he hedged the question of whether Egypt plans to pursue its objective through military or political action.

LEBANON

21. Lebanese officialdom is outraged by the Israeli attack on an inoperative radar site, in which nine or ten Lebanese soldiers were wounded. The attack--made two days after Lebanese liaison officers and met with Israeli army officers to advise them that the site was not active--has raised doubts about the utility of maintaining the liaison meetings. The US Embassy advises that the attack will increase the pressures on the government to "unleash" the fedayeen--who have already been permitted to re-enter formerly forbidden areas of southern Lebanon--and to give more positive support to Syria. The Lebanese Army has reported at least one Israeli patrol crossing the border in search of fedayeen, apparently without success. According to the Jordanian military attache in Beirut, however, an Israeli armored unit hit and occupied a fedayeen position today in the Arqub area of southern Lebanon. Lebanese officials reportedly are withholding this information for fear of inflaming public opinion.

22. Lebanese officials are under intense pressure to justify their continued non-involvement in the fighting, and are acutely uneasy about possible Israeli retaliation in response to fedayeen mortar and rocket fire against Israeli positions from southern Lebanon. The government also has one eye cocked over its shoulder at leaders of the Sunni muslim population, who have not expressed support for the government's policies during the crisis. Although no curfew or other restrictive measures have been taken, the number of army and police patrols in Beirut reportedly has increased considerably. 25X1

USSR

24. The Algerians have published the text of a message delivered last night to Boumediene from Brezhnev. The message appears to be part of Soviet diplomatic efforts to convince the Arabs that Moscow is on their side but it does not commit the Soviets to giving Egypt or Syria meaningful assistance. Instead, it puts the onus on other Arab states to offer the combatants "the greatest possible aid and support" which could play a "decisive role" in the struggle. This line suggests that Moscow will seek to blunt criticism of its own position by stressing the need for Arab solidarity.

25. There has been no significant Soviet military activity to report.

CHINA

26. Peking's first official reaction to the war in the Middle East came in a statement by Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei yesterday condemning Israeli "aggression." Chi did not mention the US or the USSR, but focused on Israeli responsibility for the fighting. His relatively moderate remarks included a pledge of continued Chinese support for the Arabs, but contained no hint that Peking would go beyond the essentially political assistance it has long given the Arab cause. Instead, Chi emphasized that the Arabs must fight their own battles. Chinese officials in Cairo, like the rest of the diplomatic community, were reportedly surprised by the outbreak of war and by the scale of Egyptian military action.

UNITED NATIONS

27. With the Security Council scheduled to resume late this afternoon, non-aligned states were reported preparing a cease-fire resolution which might bypass the current deadlock. USUN believes the resolution may call for a cease-fire coupled with steps toward a permanent settlement on the basis of Resolution 242, and may also propose a peace conference with UN and great power participation. It has been rumored in New York that Egyptian president Sadat instructed foreign minister Zayyat to work for a formula along these lines.

28. The British have been preparing a similar resolution but have assured Israel that they will not table it today. The non-aligned states may also withhold their resolution until military positions in the Middle East become clearer.

## ANNEX

ESTIMATED LOSSES

	<u>Israel</u>	<u>Arabs</u>
Aircraft	75-80	130-140
Tanks	500-600*	650
Ships (primarily patrol craft)	--	9-10
Personnel	1,000	6,000-7,000

\* Israeli report--includes tanks out of service that cannot be repaired within a week.

NOTE: Israeli aircraft losses are fairly firm and are based on Israeli admissions. There are conflicting claims, however, and the Arabs claim 110 Israeli planes downed. The Arab aircraft losses are based on reported shoot-downs and possible losses as a result of Israeli air strikes on Egyptian and Syrian airfields, as derived from both Israeli claims and Egyptian admissions. The Syrians have made no statements about the number of aircraft lost during the war. It is not possible to ascertain the types of aircraft lost.

The tank figures are estimates based on field reporting. Personnel losses are extremely rough estimates of men killed and captured. While these estimates of losses have not been confirmed, they are consistent with the forces committed to battle and the intensity of fighting on the various fronts.